

# 02. Needfinding

# Team Mango

## Homeschool Education



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We conducted  
needfinding  
interviews with 8  
individuals:

- 4 homeschooling  
parents (expert)
- 4 homeschooled  
individuals



# Key Insights

1. Motivation to Homeschool
2. Methods of Teaching
3. Peers & Community
4. Agency vs. Authority

"Peer influence might have a greater influence than parents on children." – P3



# Insight 1: Motivation to Homeschool



"In homeschooling you really get to go your own pace and go fast if you get it or bring in fun things" – P2



"I feel like our public school system is mainly in place to serve parents. It's convenient to drop your kid off because that serves the parents' lifestyle. But I don't think that's a natural way to function as a child. It's an artificial setting." – P4



- Different reasons for homeschooling
  - Religion
  - Competitive sport
  - Flexibility in pacing and opportunities
  - More direct parental influence
- Reason for homeschooling can lead to vastly different experiences and outcomes for their children



## Insight 2: Methods of Teaching

"Life is a learning laboratory." – P1  
"You only learn by doing." – S7



"The right amount of boredom is the breeding ground for creativity, but too much boredom is the breeding ground for trouble." – P1



"The really great thing about homeschooling was when and if I did find some outsourcing that was remarkable." – P3



- The methods of teaching vary widely:
  - Different teaching philosophies
  - Developing curriculum and materials
  - Online schooling
  - Exploration and field trips
  - Outsourcing to specialists
  - Focusing on the parents' strengths
- The interaction between the student and the parent/teacher is extremely important
  - Good feedback creates a positive learning environment

“What really got me into [Arts] was finding a wide variety of people and artistic artifacts I wanted to be able to also create, which I was exposed to because of meeting and talking with people; things like indie video games, exploring and being a part of communities of artists” – S3



## Insight 3: Peers & Community

- There are a variety of ways that children can make friends while being homeschooled
  - Homeschooling co-op
  - Church / youth group, Scouts
  - Sports, Music, Extracurriculars
  - Personal outreach/interest groups
- Important for kids to spend time with others their same age, with “different backgrounds, similar interests” to explore and foster their own passions
- Cultivating home relationships and friendships with siblings
- Struggles with forming deep connections before transitioning to public school



“Giving them the chance to cultivate relationships with their siblings instead of sending them off is a really big gift.” - P4



“I didn’t have that much trouble finding new friends or adapting. I had enough social experience. My mom did involve us with other communities pretty often. It wasn’t the first time I was involved in group dynamics.” – S1



"When it's just me [instructing my daughter], I think she feels like, 'Oh, Mom's just telling me what to do.' She loves the content-based subjects, but with the skill-based subjects, it's just a little harder to get the buy-in with her." – P4



"Parents say: you're my kid. I know what's best for you. But they forget that the kid needs to have some agency in the process as well." – S3



"The love of learning will be tanked if the child does not have bedrock of respect for authority in their life." – P3



## Insight 4: Agency vs. Authority

- Balance between student agency and parental authority
- Parents must decide how much autonomy to give their children in the learning process
  - Ongoing calibration while children find independence and interests
- **Recurring theme:** importance of attitude toward learning
- **Downsides:** potential for unhealthy power dynamics that have negative impacts on education and relationships



# Questions?

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